

103<sup>D</sup> CONGRESS  
2<sup>D</sup> SESSION

# S. 2099

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IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 23, 1994

Referred to the Committee on Agriculture

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## AN ACT

To establish the Northern Great Plains Rural Development  
Commission, and for other purposes.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2       *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3       **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4       This Act may be cited as the “Northern Great Plains  
5       Rural Development Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 Congress finds that—

3 (1) the rural economy of the Northern Great  
4 Plains is undergoing a substantial and potentially  
5 threatening transformation;

6 (2) the rural Northern Great Plains suffers  
7 from substantial measurable poverty, unemployment,  
8 outmigration, underemployment, aging of the popu-  
9 lation, and low per capita income;

10 (3) the Northern Great Plains is highly rural  
11 and has a highly dispersed population, and contains  
12 many Native American reservations;

13 (4) many of the basic industries of the rural  
14 Northern Great Plains in natural resources are  
15 under stress;

16 (5) a concerted Federal, State, and local public  
17 and private effort is needed if the rural Northern  
18 Great Plains is to share in the general prosperity of  
19 the United States;

20 (6) the creation of jobs and expansion of exist-  
21 ing businesses, including small businesses, offer the  
22 greatest hope for rural economic growth and revital-  
23 ization in the Northern Great Plains;

24 (7) the availability of capital, technology, mar-  
25 ket information, infrastructure development, edu-  
26 cational opportunities, health care, housing, rec-

1 reational activities, and resource development are es-  
2 sential to successful business development in the  
3 rural Northern Great Plains;

4 (8) the transportation needs of the rural North-  
5 ern Great Plains must be addressed through high-  
6 way and bridge construction, air service availability,  
7 and rail service and river transport development;

8 (9) because of the social, geographic, weather,  
9 historical, and cultural ties of the rural Northern  
10 Great Plains as well as common economic problems,  
11 planning for this unique region is desirable and ur-  
12 gently needed; and

13 (10) in the rural Northern Great Plains, the  
14 tourism industry offers significant additional poten-  
15 tial for supporting economic development and job  
16 growth, fostered by the wise stewardship of natural  
17 resources.

18 **SEC. 3. PURPOSE.**

19 The purpose of this Act is to establish the Northern  
20 Great Plains Rural Development Commission to study and  
21 make recommendations regarding the economic needs and  
22 economic development of the rural Northern Great Plains  
23 by seeking and encouraging the participation of interested  
24 citizens, public officials, groups, agencies, businesses, and

1 other entities in developing a 10-year rural economic de-  
2 velopment plan for the Northern Great Plains.

3 **SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.**

4 As used in this Act:

5 (1) CHAIRPERSON.—The term “chairperson”  
6 means the chairperson of the Commission.

7 (2) COMMISSION.—The term “Commission”  
8 means the Northern Great Plains Rural Develop-  
9 ment Commission.

10 (3) NORTHERN GREAT PLAINS.—The term  
11 “Northern Great Plains” means the States of North  
12 Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Iowa, and Min-  
13 nesota.

14 (4) STATE.—The term “State” means a State  
15 in the Northern Great Plains.

16 **SEC. 5. ESTABLISHMENT.**

17 There is established a Commission to be known as  
18 the “Northern Great Plains Rural Development Commis-  
19 sion”.

20 **SEC. 6. MEMBERSHIP AND ORGANIZATION.**

21 (a) MEMBERSHIP.—The Commission shall be com-  
22 posed of 10 members, of whom—

23 (1) 1 member shall be appointed by the Gov-  
24 ernor of each State; and

1           (2) 1 member shall be appointed from each of  
2           the States by the Secretary of Agriculture.

3           (b) TERM.—Each member of the Commission shall  
4           serve for such term as the official who appoints the mem-  
5           ber determines is appropriate.

6           (c) QUORUM.—Five members of the Commission  
7           shall constitute a quorum, but the Commission may estab-  
8           lish that a lesser number shall constitute a quorum for  
9           the purpose of conducting hearings.

10          (d) MEETINGS.—

11               (1) FIRST MEETINGS.—Five or more members  
12           appointed under subsection (a)(1) shall determine  
13           the date, time, and place of the first meeting, and  
14           shall call the first meeting. At the first meeting, the  
15           members of the Commission shall appoint a chair-  
16           person from among the members appointed under  
17           subsection (a)(1). The first meeting of the Commis-  
18           sion shall be held not later than 45 days after the  
19           date of enactment of this Act.

20               (2) ADDITIONAL MEETINGS.—The Commission  
21           shall conduct such additional meetings as the Com-  
22           mission determines are appropriate.

23           (e) APPOINTMENTS.—Each appointment under this  
24           Act shall be made not later than 30 days after the date  
25           of enactment of this Act.

1 (f) VACANCIES.—A vacancy on the Commission shall  
2 not affect the powers of the Commission and shall be filled  
3 in the same manner in which the original appointment was  
4 made.

5 (g) HEADQUARTERS.—The Commission shall estab-  
6 lish the location for the headquarters of the Commission.

7 **SEC. 7. DUTIES.**

8 (a) PLAN.—The Commission shall identify and study  
9 the economic development, infrastructure, technology,  
10 telecommunications, capital, employment, transportation,  
11 business resource development, education, health care,  
12 housing, and recreation needs of the Northern Great  
13 Plains and develop a 10-year plan that makes rec-  
14 ommendations and establishes priorities to address the  
15 needs.

16 (b) PREPARATION OF PLAN.—In developing the plan,  
17 the Commission shall, with respect to the Northern Great  
18 Plains—

19 (1) sponsor and conduct investigations, research  
20 studies, and field hearings;

21 (2) review and evaluate available research, stud-  
22 ies, and information on conditions in the areas re-  
23 ferred to in subsection (a);

1           (3) study the economy, identifying strengths,  
2 weaknesses, participation levels, opportunities, and  
3 methods of addressing outmigration;

4           (4) develop a profile of, and a description of re-  
5 sources devoted to, economic development (including  
6 tourism), human resources (including demographics,  
7 outmigration, poverty, Native Americans, education,  
8 and training), infrastructure (including air, water,  
9 highway, rail, and telecommunications), and natural  
10 resources;

11          (5) study and evaluate the economic develop-  
12 ment resources, coordination, collaboration, and  
13 “best practices” of the Federal, State, and local gov-  
14 ernments, nonprofit organizations, universities, busi-  
15 nesses, agricultural and natural resources groups,  
16 foundations, cooperatives, and other organizations;

17          (6) identify methods of facilitating the employ-  
18 ment and business startups of unemployed, under-  
19 employed, and low-income individuals and house-  
20 holds;

21          (7) identify effective methods for promoting de-  
22 velopment on Native American reservations;

23          (8) study the availability of methods of deliver-  
24 ing public, private, and nonprofit capital and tech-

1 nical assistance for business startups and expan-  
2 sions, including farming and ranching;

3 (9) evaluate the availability of, need for, and  
4 strategies for providing and maintaining, the infra-  
5 structure, including air, water, highway, rail, and  
6 telecommunications;

7 (10) study the structure and potential develop-  
8 ment of major industries, including agriculture, tim-  
9 ber, mining, tourism, and manufacturing (including  
10 the use of advanced technologies and processes and  
11 adding value to raw materials and component parts);

12 (11) study the competence and availability of  
13 the labor force, including the health, educational,  
14 training, housing, and economic needs of the labor  
15 force;

16 (12) develop an inventory of water, mineral, en-  
17 ergy, timber, agricultural, fishery, wildlife, and other  
18 natural resources;

19 (13) assess the comparative cost of doing busi-  
20 ness;

21 (14) assess the international trading levels,  
22 markets, and practices, and potential opportunities;

23 (15) assess the interconnection between metro-  
24 politan and rural areas and identify methods  
25 through which the areas can collaborate;



1           (16) assess methods by which small commu-  
2           nities and regions are collaborating or can collabo-  
3           rate in economic development initiatives;

4           (17) evaluate—

5                 (A) the distribution and impact of Federal  
6                 spending, including grant-in-aid programs, re-  
7                 search, and Federal procurement, and compare  
8                 the level of spending in these categories with  
9                 spending in other regions of the country; and

10                (B) the extent to which reliance on Fed-  
11                eral, State, and local government outlays for  
12                poverty programs can be reduced by outlays  
13                targeted for economic development;

14           (18) identify Federal, State, and local govern-  
15           ment programs, policies, and regulations that en-  
16           hance or obstruct the development of businesses and  
17           well-paying jobs with long-term potential and that  
18           effectively use the skills, education, and training of  
19           the labor force;

20           (19) evaluate the potential for States to jointly  
21           finance projects and activities of regional benefit;  
22           and

23           (20) analyze such other issues as the Commis-  
24           sion determines are relevant to future economic de-  
25           velopment.

1 (c) DEVELOPMENT OF PLAN.—In developing the  
2 plan, the Commission shall—

3 (1) provide a forum for the consideration of the  
4 problems of the rural Northern Great Plains and  
5 proposed solutions, and establish and utilize citizens  
6 groups, special advisory councils, public hearings,  
7 and conferences;

8 (2) seek and encourage the participation of in-  
9 terested citizens, public officials, groups, agencies,  
10 economic development organizations, natural re-  
11 source organizations, and other organizations;

12 (3) make the Commission accessible to the indi-  
13 viduals, groups, agencies, and organizations referred  
14 to in paragraph (2) by holding at least 1 well pub-  
15 licized public hearing in each State; and

16 (4) consult with—

17 (A) Federal, State, and local government  
18 agencies, including the Departments of Agri-  
19 culture, Commerce, Education, Labor, Health  
20 and Human Services, Housing and Urban De-  
21 velopment, and Transportation, and the Small  
22 Business Administration, bank regulatory agen-  
23 cies, and rural development councils;

1 (B) banks, insurance companies, venture  
2 capital companies, and other for-profit financial  
3 institutions;

4 (C) nonprofit and community-based devel-  
5 opment organizations, revolving loan funds, and  
6 other organizations;

7 (D) industry and sectoral organizations;

8 (E) foundations and universities; and

9 (F) other organizations involved in eco-  
10 nomic development activities.

11 **SEC. 8. COMPENSATION OF MEMBERS.**

12 (a) MEMBERS APPOINTED BY GOVERNORS.—Each  
13 member of the Commission appointed by a Governor of  
14 a State may be compensated by the State that the member  
15 represents.

16 (b) MEMBERS APPOINTED BY THE SECRETARY.—  
17 Each member appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture,  
18 who is not otherwise employed by the United States Gov-  
19 ernment, shall receive compensation at a rate determined  
20 by the Secretary of not to exceed the daily equivalent of  
21 the lowest annual rate of basic pay payable for grade GS-  
22 15 of the General Schedule under section 5332 of title  
23 5, United States Code, including traveltime, for each day  
24 the member is engaged in the actual performance of the  
25 duties of the Commission. A member of the Commission

1 appointed by the Secretary who is an officer or employee  
2 of the United States Government shall serve without addi-  
3 tional compensation.

4 (c) TRAVEL AND OTHER EXPENSES.—Each member  
5 of the Commission shall be allowed travel expenses, includ-  
6 ing per diem in lieu of subsistence, at rates authorized  
7 for employees of agencies under subchapter I of chapter  
8 57 of title 5, United States Code, while away from the  
9 home or regular place of business of the member in the  
10 performance of services for the Commission. Each member  
11 of the Commission shall also be reimbursed by the United  
12 States Government for other necessary expenses incurred  
13 by the member in the performance of the duties of the  
14 member.

15 **SEC. 9. POWERS AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS.**

16 (a) EXPERTS AND CONSULTANTS.—The Commission  
17 may obtain the services of experts and consultants in ac-  
18 cordance with section 3109 of title 5, United States Code.

19 (b) FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES.—  
20 The Commission may enter into agreements with the Ad-  
21 ministrator of General Services for the procurement of  
22 necessary financial and administrative services, for which  
23 payment shall be made by reimbursement from funds of  
24 the Commission in such amounts as are agreed on by the  
25 chairperson and the Administrator of General Services.

1       (c) CONTRACTS.—Subject to subsection (d), the Com-  
2 mission may enter into contracts with Federal and State  
3 agencies and private firms, institutions, and agencies for  
4 the conduct of research and surveys, the preparation of  
5 reports, and other activities necessary to carry out the du-  
6 ties of the Commission.

7       (d) SUPPLIES, SERVICES, PROPERTY, AND CON-  
8 TRACTS.—The Commission may procure supplies, serv-  
9 ices, and property, and make contracts in any fiscal year,  
10 only to such extent and in such amounts as are provided  
11 in appropriation Acts.

12       (e) HEARINGS.—The Commission or, on the author-  
13 ization of the Commission, a member of the Commission  
14 may, for the purpose of carrying out this Act, hold such  
15 hearings, sit and act at such times and places, and request  
16 the attendance and testimony of such witnesses and the  
17 production of such books, records, memoranda, papers,  
18 and documents as the Commission or the member consid-  
19 ers appropriate.

20       (f) INFORMATION.—The Commission may acquire di-  
21 rectly from any executive department, bureau, agency,  
22 board, commission, office, independent establishment, or  
23 instrumentality, information, suggestions, estimates, and  
24 statistics for the purpose of this Act. Each department,  
25 bureau, agency, board, commission, office, establishment,

1 or instrumentality shall provide, to the extent permitted  
2 by law, the information, suggestions, estimates, and statis-  
3 tics directly to the Commission, upon request by the chair-  
4 person.

5 (g) PERSONNEL.—

6 (1) IN GENERAL.—Without regard to the provi-  
7 sions of title 5, United States Code, governing ap-  
8 pointments in the competitive service, and without  
9 regard to chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter  
10 53 of such title relating to classification and General  
11 Schedule pay rates, the chairperson of the Commis-  
12 sion may appoint, terminate, and fix the compensa-  
13 tion of an Executive Director and such additional  
14 personnel as the chairperson determines are nec-  
15 essary to enable the Commission to carry out the du-  
16 ties of the Commission.

17 (2) COMPENSATION.—The rate of compensation  
18 of the Executive Director may not exceed a rate  
19 equal to the daily equivalent of the annual rate of  
20 basic pay payable for level V of the Executive Sched-  
21 ule under section 5316 of such title. The rate of  
22 compensation of all other personnel may not exceed  
23 a rate equal to the daily equivalent of the lowest an-  
24 nual rate of basic pay payable for grade GS-15 of

1 the General Schedule under section 5332 of such  
2 title.

3 (h) ASSISTANCE FROM OTHER AGENCIES.—Upon re-  
4 quest of the Commission, the head of any Federal agency  
5 may make any of the facilities and services of the agency  
6 available to the Commission or detail any of the personnel  
7 of the agency to the Commission, on a reimbursable basis,  
8 to assist the Commission in carrying out the duties of the  
9 Commission under this Act. If the head of an agency de-  
10 termines that the agency cannot make the facilities, serv-  
11 ices, or personnel available to the Commission, the head  
12 shall notify the chairperson in writing.

13 (i) POSTAL SERVICES.—The Commission may use  
14 the United States mails in the same manner and under  
15 the same conditions as other departments and agencies of  
16 the United States.

17 **SEC. 10. REPORTS.**

18 (a) INTERIM REPORT.—Before the end of the 270-  
19 day period beginning on the date of the first meeting of  
20 the Commission under section 6(d)(1), the Commission  
21 shall submit a report to the Secretary of Agriculture, the  
22 President pro tempore of the Senate, the Committee on  
23 Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate, the  
24 Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Committee  
25 on Agriculture of the House of Representatives, the Presi-

1 dent, and the Governor of each State, describing the find-  
2 ings and activities of the Commission and the further ac-  
3 tivities necessary to carry out the duties of the Commis-  
4 sion.

5 (b) FINAL REPORT.—

6 (1) IN GENERAL.—Before the end of the 18-  
7 month period beginning on the date of the first  
8 meeting of the Commission under section 6(d)(1),  
9 the Commission shall submit to the Secretary of Ag-  
10 riculture, the President pro tempore of the Senate,  
11 the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and For-  
12 estry of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of  
13 Representatives, the Committee on Agriculture of  
14 the House of Representatives, the President, and the  
15 Governor of each State, a report describing the find-  
16 ings and activities of the Commission and rec-  
17 ommendations in accordance with paragraph (2) re-  
18 garding specific actions that are necessary to pro-  
19 mote the economic development of the rural North-  
20 ern Great Plains while preserving, to the maximum  
21 extent possible, the natural beauty and habitat of  
22 the Northern Great Plains.

23 (2) RECOMMENDATIONS.—



1 (A) REGIONAL COLLABORATION.—The  
2 Commission shall, with respect to the Northern  
3 Great Plains—

4 (i) determine the most effective and  
5 appropriate method for ensuring continued  
6 collaboration within the region on economic  
7 development matters, considering regional  
8 compacts, cooperatives, foundations, devel-  
9 opment corporations, and other agreements  
10 and organizations;

11 (ii) identify the organizational struc-  
12 ture, method of financing, functions, and  
13 participating organizations, of the collabo-  
14 ration referred to in clause (i);

15 (iii) identify methods of effective  
16 multi-community, substate, and small re-  
17 gion development; and

18 (iv) assess the interconnection be-  
19 tween metropolitan and rural areas and  
20 identify methods of collaboration between  
21 the areas.

22 (B) BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT.—The Com-  
23 mission shall, with respect to the rural North-  
24 ern Great Plains—

1 (i) recommend methods of diversifying  
2 the rural economy, including the develop-  
3 ment and financing of value-added and  
4 new-use agricultural products;

5 (ii) develop methods to promote and  
6 finance beginning owner-occupied farming  
7 and ranching operations;

8 (iii) recommend methods of promoting  
9 entrepreneurial development, including  
10 business startups and expansions;

11 (iv) recommend methods in which the  
12 public, private, and nonprofit sectors can  
13 help increase international trading levels  
14 and penetrate new markets in agricultural,  
15 manufactured, and service products;

16 (v) evaluate the potential utility of  
17 business and manufacturing networks in  
18 target sectors;

19 (vi) assess the competitiveness of  
20 manufacturers and the use of modern tech-  
21 nology, processes, and information by the  
22 manufacturers, and methods of assisting  
23 manufacturers lacking the technology,  
24 processes, or information;

1 (vii) recommend methods in which  
2 capital and technical assistance can be pro-  
3 vided on a regional or sectoral basis to  
4 business startups and expansions by pub-  
5 lic, private, and nonprofit organizations;  
6 and

7 (viii) recommend ways in which Fed-  
8 eral and State resource conservation pro-  
9 grams can be used to encourage tourism in  
10 the region.

11 (C) CAPITAL.—The Commission shall, with  
12 respect to the rural Northern Great Plains—

13 (i) determine if there are capital needs  
14 in the economy, and in what part of the  
15 economy the needs are located, and rec-  
16 ommend how governmental, nonprofit, co-  
17 operative, community-based, microlending,  
18 banking, venture, seed, and nonbanking fi-  
19 nancing sources can assist in meeting the  
20 needs;

21 (ii) identify such strategies in organi-  
22 zation, regulations, policy, marketing, and  
23 coordination as are needed to implement a  
24 plan to meet the needs referred to in  
25 clause (i); and

1 (iii) recommend methods of utilizing  
2 secondary financial markets to increase the  
3 capital available for business development.

4 (D) INFRASTRUCTURE.—The Commission  
5 shall, with respect to the rural Northern Great  
6 Plains—

7 (i) prepare a plan to preserve, finance,  
8 and operate effective freight railroad serv-  
9 ice in coordination with States, the Federal  
10 Railroad Administration, the Interstate  
11 Commerce Commission, rail operators,  
12 shippers, and the financial community;

13 (ii) prepare an assessment and agree-  
14 ment on the capital needs, coordination,  
15 and financing of telecommunications infra-  
16 structure, in cooperation with the Depart-  
17 ment of Agriculture, the National Tele-  
18 communications and Information Adminis-  
19 tration of the Department of Commerce,  
20 the Federal Communications Commission,  
21 the public utilities commission of each  
22 State, telephone companies and coopera-  
23 tives, representative users, and such other  
24 entities as the Commission determines are  
25 appropriate; and

1 (iii) recommend strategies for ad-  
2 dressing air, water, and highway needs.

3 (E) HUMAN RESOURCES.—The Commis-  
4 sion shall, with respect to the rural Northern  
5 Great Plains—

6 (i) identify methods of facilitating the  
7 employment and business startups of indi-  
8 viduals who are not effectively participat-  
9 ing in the labor force, including unem-  
10 ployed, underemployed, and low-income in-  
11 dividuals and households;

12 (ii) identify methods of coordinating  
13 on a regional or sectoral basis education  
14 and training programs that are tied to eco-  
15 nomic development initiatives, especially  
16 programs that address the outmigration of  
17 youth; and

18 (iii) study the competence and avail-  
19 ability of the labor force and the effects of  
20 the health, educational, training, housing,  
21 and economic needs of the labor force, and  
22 identify regional strategies addressing the  
23 needs.

24 (F) GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS, POLICIES,  
25 AND REGULATIONS.—The Commission shall

1 submit to the appropriate government, non-  
 2 profit, and private sector organizations rec-  
 3 ommendations for modifications or additions to  
 4 the programs, policies, and regulations referred  
 5 to in section 7(b)(18) to promote the rural de-  
 6 velopment of the Northern Great Plains.

7 **SEC. 11. TERMINATION.**

8 The Commission shall terminate on the earlier of—  
 9 (1) 120 days after the date of submission of the  
 10 final report under section 10; and  
 11 (2) 2 years after the date of enactment of this  
 12 Act.

13 **SEC. 12. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

14 There are authorized to be appropriated such sums  
 15 as are necessary to carry out this Act.

Passed the Senate June 22 (legislative day, June 7),  
 1994.

Attest:

MARTHA S. POPE,  
*Secretary.*

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